

What is claimed is:

1. A shutter for a building aperture comprising:
  - a shutter curtain having a first and a second face, the shutter curtain being locatable in the aperture;
  - a filament spanning the aperture and lying in a plane substantially parallel and adjacent to the first face of the shutter curtain; and
  - a tensioning device for applying tension to the filament to provide support to the curtain against flexure thereof in a direction towards the filament.
2. The shutter according to claim 1, wherein the filament comprises a metallic wire.
3. The shutter according to claim 1, wherein the tensioning device comprises a winch around which the filament is wound.
4. The shutter according to claim 3, wherein the winch comprises a locking element for selectively locking the winch against unwinding.
5. The shutter according to claim 1, wherein the shutter further comprises first and second guides which respectively receive and guide opposing lateral edges of the curtain, the guides being located on opposing lateral edges of the aperture.
6. The shutter according to claim 5, wherein a first end of the filament is retained on the first guide and the tensioning device is provided on the second guide, a second end of the filament being received by the tensioning device.
7. The shutter according to claim 5, wherein a first end of the filament is retained on the first guide and a retaining element is provided on the second guide, the filament passing around the retaining element and being received by the tensioning device.
8. The shutter according to claim 7, wherein a plurality of retaining elements are provided and the filament is laced around the retaining elements.
9. The shutter according to claim 8, wherein the retaining elements are slidably mounted to the first and second guides.
10. The shutter according to claim 1, wherein the shutter further comprises a second filament spanning the aperture.
11. The shutter according to claim 10, further comprising a second tensioning device for applying tension to the second filament.

12. The shutter according to claim 10, wherein the second filament lies in a plane substantially parallel and adjacent to the second face of the shutter curtain.
13. The shutter according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of filaments are provided, the plurality of filaments being tensioned by a single tensioning device.
14. The shutter according to claim 1, wherein a storage device is provided for storing at least part of the filament when not under tension.
15. The shutter according to claim 14, wherein the storage device comprises an elastic element biasing the filament in a direction into the storage device.
16. A storm retainer for retaining a shutter curtain against flexure, the shutter curtain being located across an aperture of a building, the storm retainer comprising:
  - a filament;
  - an anchor attached to a first portion of the filament and securing the first portion with respect to the aperture;
  - a tensioning device, the tensioning device being secured with respect to the aperture and being attached to a second portion of the filament, actuation of the tensioning device causing tensioning of the filament from the first portion to the second portion.
17. The storm retainer according to claim 16, wherein the anchor attaches to the building adjacent to the aperture.
18. The storm retainer according to claim 16, wherein the shutter curtain is provided with a frame and the anchor attaches to the frame.
19. A shutter for a building aperture comprising:
  - a plurality of slats articulated to one another to form a shutter curtain, at least one of the slats having a hollow interior;
  - lateral guides located on opposite sides of the building aperture, each lateral guide having a channel serving to guide the curtain for sliding motion along the guides;
  - a filament extending through the hollow interior of the at least one slat, the filament having first and second ends;
  - a wind-lock attached to each of the first and second ends of the filament and extending into the channels of the guides;

restraining elements located within the guides, the restraining elements preventing removal of the wind-locks from the channels; and

a tensioning device for selectively applying tension to the filament to tension the wind-locks against the restraining elements.

20. The shutter according to claim 19, wherein the filament comprises two filament sections and the tensioning device comprises a turnbuckle, rotatable to draw the two filament sections together.

21. The shutter according to claim 19, wherein the filament comprises two filament sections and the tensioning device comprises a lever clamp, pivotable to draw the two filament sections together.

22. The shutter according to claim 19, wherein at least one restraining element is movable with respect to the other restraining element and the tensioning device comprises an actuator to move the at least one restraining element to tension the filament.

23. A method of restraining against flexure a shutter provided in a building aperture, the method comprising:

providing a substantially inextensible filament;

disposing the filament across the aperture to lie substantially in the plane of the shutter; and

applying tension to the filament.

24. A shutter for a building aperture comprising:

a shutter curtain having a first and a second face, the shutter curtain being locatable in the aperture;

a flexible strengthening means spanning the aperture and lying in a plane substantially parallel and adjacent to the first face of the shutter curtain; and

tensioning means for applying tension to the flexible strengthening means to provide support to the curtain against flexure thereof in a direction towards the flexible strengthening means.

25. The shutter according to claim 24, wherein the shutter further comprises first and second guides which respectively receive and guide opposing lateral edges of the curtain, said guides being located on opposing lateral edges of the aperture.

26. The shutter according to claim 25, wherein the flexible strengthening means includes a first end and a second end, and wherein said first end of the flexible strengthening means is retained on said first guide and said tensioning means is provided on the second guide, said second end of the flexible strengthening means being connected by attachment means to said tensioning means.

27. The shutter according to claim 26, wherein said tensioning means comprise a knob having a threaded extension which receives the second end of said flexible strengthening means.

28. The shutter according to claim 27 wherein the tensioning means further comprises a movable restraining element which engages said second guide.

29. The shutter according to claim 27 wherein said tensioning means further comprises means for engaging the threaded extension.

30. The shutter according to claim 28 wherein the means for engaging the threaded extension comprise a nut for securing the threaded extension of the tensioning means

31. The shutter according to claim 29 wherein the tensioning means is disposed within a slot within the second guide such that the nut may be engaged by the second guide, and whereby the flexible strengthening means may be maintained at a desired tension.

32. The shutter according to claim 27 wherein the means for engaging the threaded extension comprise a threaded receptacle affixed to the second guide.

33. The shutter according to claim 26, wherein the attachment means comprise a spherical terminus of the flexible strengthening means, whereby the diameter of the spherical terminus is large enough to allow engagement with the tensioning means.

34. The shutter according to claim 24, wherein a second flexible strengthening means spans the aperture and lies in a plane substantially parallel and adjacent to the second face of the shutter curtain.

35. The shutter according to claim 26 wherein a plurality of said flexible strengthening means are retained between said first and second guides in parallel to one another and wherein one or more additional flexible strengthening means are slidably

mounted transversely upon said plurality of parallel flexible strengthening means whereby the resulting configuration of flexible strengthening means is a grid.

36. The shutter according to claim 1 wherein said tensioning device comprises the shutter curtain whereby the shutter curtain provides tension to the filament as the shutter curtain is flexed or bowed by the wind.

37. The shutter according to claim 24 wherein said tensioning device comprises the shutter curtain whereby the shutter curtain provides tension to the flexible strengthening device as the shutter curtain is flexed or bowed by the wind.

38. The shutter according to claim 24 wherein the shutter curtain comprises a rigid panel having one or more apertures adapted to receive said filament.